

11 Short Game Drills To
Help You Up And Down
It From Anywhere!



Table of Contents

Introduction 3
Chipping 4
 Drill #1 - Wrist Firm (Part 1) 4
 Drill #2 - Wrist Firm (Part 2) 4
 Drill #3 - Chipping Accuracy 6
Pitching 8
 Drill #1 - Distance Control (Part 1) 8
 Drill #2 - Distance Control (Part 2) 8
 Drill #3 - Distance Control (Part 2) 9
 Drill #4 - Ball Contact 10
Bunker Shots 12
 Drill #1 - Right Heel Up 12
 Drill #2 - The Plank 12
 Drill #3 - Sand Strike 13
 Drill #4 - Golf Tee 13
Conclusion 15

Introduction

The drills and exercises in this book will help you to improve your short game, but **ONLY** if you use and practice them. Reading these drills and exercises and then doing nothing obviously will have no impact on whether you up and down it more often. **You must take some action to get results.**

But before you try anything from this book I suggest you read through all the instructions once. Then pick the one exercise or drill from each of the 3 main sections:

- a) Chipping
- b) Pitching
- c) Bunker Shots

...that you like the sound of. Then practice each drill/exercise consistently for at least 30 days before you practice another one. That way you can help to form a good habit in each of the 3 main areas of the short game at the same time.

OK, so that's the plan. Start by reading the instructions in this book and then put them into action as I've just described...

Chipping

Drill #1 - Wrist Firm (Part 1)

When you chip you should keep your wrists firm. And here is a great way to feel this.

Grab two clubs and grip one as normal and put the second club next to the first so you have an extension as is pictured below. Once this is in place simply chip as normal and if you find that on your follow-through you hit your body with the extended club, then that is a sure sign you are using your wrists incorrectly.



When chipping you should in effect be blocking the shot so the wrists don't break down at all. So simply keep practicing until your new chipping action becomes a habit.

Drill #2 - Wrist Firm (Part 2)

Here's a **"great"** drill that will teach you the correct wrist and arm action needed for great chipping. Simply setup to a chip shot as normal, as I'm pictured doing below, and then take off your top hand and put it on the back of your bottom hand.

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Now from this **“strange”** setup position I want you to simply swing back and through.



What you’ll find from doing this drill is that your right wrist is forced to keep the angle that is created and this will lead your hands through the stroke. This should be happening when chipping, because you never want the clubhead to overtake your hands when chipping.

Keep doing this drill over and over again to ingrain this feel and to make it a habit. You’ll feel so different when chipping after doing this drill and your confidence will rise accordingly. You’ll love this drill and the results it gives you, trust me!

Drill #3 - Chipping Accuracy

A lot of golfers lack accuracy in all areas of their game for one simple reason. They aim the club in the wrong direction to start with. Aiming the club should be one of the simplest things in golf but very few golfers do this well, and I think it's because most golfers setup at the final target instead of an intermediate target.

Whether you're chipping, pitching or hitting a long shot you should always pick out your final target and then imagine a line back from this to your ball, and then pick out a spot about 2-3 feet in front of your ball that you can aim at. Doing this will make it much easier for you to aim your club, instead of trying to aim it at some target which is often yards and yards away.

Accuracy when chipping should be easy, but a lot of golfers find it difficult because they use too many moving parts. Your chipping swing should move pretty much straight back and straight through. It is especially important that the clubface goes directly down the line towards the target, even after you've hit the ball.

A good drill to learn how to do this is by placing clubs on the ground pointing directly towards your target and either side of the ball so you have enough room to have the club move backwards and forwards to the target. Just keep chipping balls making sure your club is going more or less straight back and straight through.



Obviously for longer chips and pitches the club should go on a more rounded arc, but for short chips you should play them just like long putts. Actually it can also increase your accuracy if you use your putting grip for chip shots and use the same pendulum action.

Another great drill for improving chipping accuracy is to get a piece of four by two or an umbrella and place it so it's pointing directly towards your target. Then simply place a ball just on the inside of it so you have enough room to put the clubhead to the ball, then chip along the piece of wood or umbrella. This drill will

give you instant feedback as to whether or not you are swinging straight back and straight through.



So here's a summary of what you should do to improve your accuracy when chipping...

- Pick an intermediate target 2-3 feet in front of your ball on a line directly at your target.
- Place clubs on the ground with enough room so that you can hit balls between them and this will act as a guide for you to swing straight back and straight through.
- Chip along a piece of four by two to once again get the feeling of swinging straight back and straight through.

One final thought. The more you can keep your club moving straight along your target line the more accurate you'll be. Good luck.

Pitching

Drill #1 - Distance Control (Part 1)

Here's a very simple drill that will help you to train yourself to hit shots certain distances. Simply place objects at 10 yard spaces starting 10 yards away from you. So place an object at 10 yards, 20 yards, 30 yards, 40 yards, 50 yards etc..

Once this is setup then choose a club you normally pitch with and pitch just one ball to each object. Don't hit two balls to the same object because you don't get two chances on the golf course do you? Start this drill by hitting to the closest object then hit the to the next object and the next, and so on. But after a while of doing this mix up where you want your ball to finish.

Doing this over and over again will help you to assimilate how far you have to swing back and through to hit your ball consistently certain distances. This of course will greatly improve your consistency on the course as long as you can easily and quickly tell distances from your ball to your target. I suggest to help you, you have a notebook with easily identifiable objects on the course that easily tells you how far you are to the green.

Having information on how far it is to your target will greatly help you in your confidence over a shot because you will be able to associate a certain distance to what you've practiced on the range.

Drill #2 - Distance Control (Part 2)

The reason most golfers are inconsistent when it comes to pitching is because the swing needed to hit the ball the required distance needs to be shorter than a full swing. Now because most golfers hit full shots the majority of the time they find it difficult to make these shorter swings. But do you know what will help? Practice!

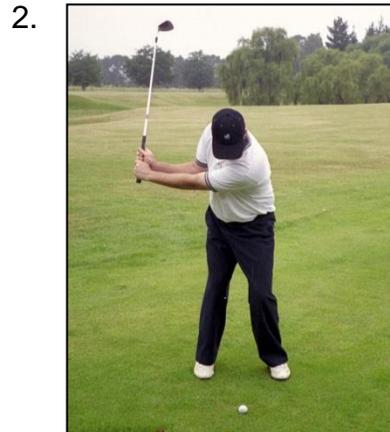
You've got to practice swinging back shorter than a full swing and then follow-through. And here's the most important point from these instructions. When pitching you should always follow-through further than your backswing. The reason for this is simple.

By following-through further than your backswing you are creating a swing that will accelerate through the ball. If you don't do this, then your results are going to be inconsistent at best and disastrous at worst.

So I want you to practice a shorter swing, and for consistent pitch shots you must make sure that your ball position is the same time after time. I suggest that you have your ball positioned in the middle of your stance as I'm demonstrating

below. Do not have it any further forward than this unless you are playing a flop shot (*high shot*).

From a setup position similar to this I want you to take your club back halfway so your arm is left parallel to the ground (**see picture 2**). Now from this position simply follow-through, but **DO NOT** stop at a position similar to photo number 3 but rather carry on through until a position like photo number 4.



And to improve your pitching simply keep practicing this back and through motion, with or without a ball. Remember on all pitch shots to follow-through further than your backswing and you'll dramatically improve your consistency. One last point. To start with, really exaggerate the short backswing and the long follow-through. This will help.

Drill #3 - Distance Control (Part 2)

To improve your distance control with medium length pitch shots (*e.g. 20 – 50 yards*) go out to the practice green or your backyard and spend five minutes or so **tossing balls underhand** onto the practice green or to a set target at home.

Doing this will help your rhythm and tempo when you go to pitch a ball because the tempo and rhythm used to toss a ball should be similar to the tempo and rhythm required to hit good pitch shots.

When you are underhand tossing the balls you should be aware of how your hand adjusts to produce different trajectories and distances. So, experiment and toss the ball at different trajectories and from different distances away from your target. ***Feel and notice the difference in your actions.***

After underhand tossing balls ***for at least 5 minutes*** then hit some pitch shots from the distances you've been at. The action of underhand tossing a ball to your target is also a great tool to use in your visualization of how you want to play a shot, plus it's also an easy action and that association will do your pitching a world of good.

Drill #4 - Ball Contact

Most golfers fat and thin pitch and chip shots because they overuse the arms and hands in an attempt to lift these shots up in the air. Although this is a natural tendency from the time you first picked up a golf club, you now know that you must hit down on a golf ball to make it go up. Although most golfers know this fact, for some this is still a hard concept to grasp (*at least subconsciously and for others, consciously*) and many times a golfer knows what they should do, but they still don't do it!

Pitching and chipping techniques vary greatly from the Long Game in the fact that the club should be taken on a more up and down arc rather than the sweeping motion used for longer shots. Everywhere you see people advising golfers to take the club back "*slow and low,*" and although *this is great advice for the long game* it does little good for shorter shots, i.e. chips and pitches.

If you think your long game swing is creeping into your short game, or even if you don't, I urge you to try this drill, you may be surprised at the result.

Place a ball about 8-10 inches behind the ball you are about to chip or pitch. Now make your normal swing and if you hit the ball behind on your backswing then that immediately signals that you're taking the club back to low for *pitching and chipping (and bunker shots for that matter)*. If you missed the second ball on your backswing but hit it on your downswing then that signals that you are coming into the ball on a too shallow arc.

Chip and pitch shots are all about making crisp contact with the ball first and you do this by hitting positively down into the back of the ball. If your backswing is not upright enough then you will have to make compensations in your downswing in an attempt to make contact with the ball.

It makes sense that if you take the club back more upright then it will naturally come down on a more upright plane, and this is the goal here. If your backswing is too shallow or your downswing is too shallow the solution is simple.....

All you have to do is keep hitting chip and pitch shots with a second ball about 8-10 inches behind the first and keep practicing grooving your new backswing and downswing until you make consistent clean contact with the first ball.

After you've grooved this new upright backswing and downswing you simply have to monitor these shots by putting a ball behind the first like you've done, every month or so and if you find you've slipped back into your old habits you know what you need to do.

Now here is a word of caution. If your long game swing was the same for the short game it makes sense that if you practice the short game a lot then some of these elements, i.e. the upright backswing, may become part of your long game, and you don't want that to happen.

To ensure this doesn't happen you must split your practice time between working on the drill I've just given you and hitting some long shots concentrating on taking the club back "*slow and low.*" You must learn to switch between the two different games (*i.e. long game & short game*) as *quickly* and as *easily* as you go from changing techniques from driving to putting.

Any time you have a shot that is less than your full swing, it's time to change techniques. And here is some more advice that will improve the consistency in your pitch and chip shots.

When pitching you should position the ball in the middle of your stance as well as having your weight positioned about 60/40 on your left side at address.

When chipping, your weight should be mostly on your left side and it should stay there throughout the swing. The ball should be positioned off your back foot, and this is very important.

If you position the ball too far forward when chipping or pitching you'll have to get the arms and hands involved more than is needed and this is a major cause of golfers inconsistencies in this area.

So in conclusion please try this drill I've given you, even if you are an 'OK' pitcher or chipper and follow the suggestions above about setting up for these shots. One final thing, it is a lot better to have the ball positioned further back when pitching and chipping than the reverse. So if in doubt, move it back. Good luck.

Bunker Shots

Drill #1 - Right Heel Up

Most inconsistent bunker players have way too much lower body action when playing sand shots. As you can imagine the more moving parts you have, generally the more inconsistent your results will be. To make your bunker play more simple and therefore more repeatable, here's a simple drill you can do.

Go to your local practice bunker and place at least 30 balls in the bunker. Now setup to a bunker shot as normal, but just before you start your swing raise your right heel off the ground (*left heel for a left hander*). Doing this places your weight on the balls of your feet and most of your weight on your left side, which is where it should be for most bunker shots.

Once setup with your back heel off the ground, simply swing making sure your heel remains in the same position. Doing this may seem like you're reverse pivoting, but you shouldn't be if you transfer your weight to the balls of your feet and you should be doing this anyway.

So when doing this remember that most of your weight should be placed on your front foot at setup, and when you swing most of the weight should stay on the front foot but the weight that is transferred back should be on the balls of your feet and not on the heels. That's why this drills works so well because it restricts your leg work and gets you into the same good position swing after swing.

Drill #2 - The Plank

The first suggestion I have is to get used to having a ball in front of you and not aiming to hit it! Here's a drill that will teach you this important aspect of bunker play. Tee up a ball very high and address this ball with your open faced sand wedge. Now swing normally but aim to hit the tee from under the ball and not the ball itself. Keep practicing this until you can hit the tee from underneath the ball for 30 consecutive shots. Once you can do this move to this next drill.

First get a plank of wood that is about 4 feet long, a foot wide and an inch thick. Now go to your practice bunker and bury this plank of wood just beneath the sand and make sure its length is pointing at your target. Once you've covered the board with a good layer of sand, place a ball over the top of the middle of this plank.

Now setup to this bunker shot as you normally would and swing with your newly found bunker technique of hitting underneath the ball and try to enter 2 inches behind the ball. If you do this successfully, or even if you don't as long as you enter the sand before the ball, you'll feel what it's like to bounce the club through

the sand because the plank of wood stops your club from digging too deeply and bounces the club for you.

Hit 10 or so shots from this area with the plank underneath and then hit a couple of shots without the plank. Keep doing this until you're comfortable with the bouncing feeling. Get used to the feeling of bouncing the club through the sand and hitting underneath the ball and your bunker play will dramatically improve.

Drill #3 - Sand Strike

You probably know that you should strike the sand first, but what you wouldn't know is how far behind the ball you should enter the sand to hit the bunker shot a consistent distance. Plus you probably don't know if you are consistently entering the sand where you want and need to. But that's all going to change and so will your consistency IF you follow the following advice.

Go out to a practice bunker and place 20 balls in the trap. Now line these 20 balls up so you can hit one after the other by moving slightly to the right if you're a right hander and vice versa for a leftie.

When the 20 balls are setup in a line get the butt end of your club and draw a line about 1 ½ inches behind the balls. Now hit one ball after the other with the goal of striking the sand on the line you've drawn. You'll soon find from doing this the reason why you are so inconsistent out of bunkers.

Once you can enter the sand consistently on this line (and it will probably take a lot more than 20 balls), then see how far the balls are going and change your swing length and pace of your swing to hit the ball different distances.

Also, you can experiment with drawing the line either closer to the balls or further away. There are no rights or wrongs in relation to how close to the ball you strike the sand. So experiment and learn from what you do. Once you can consistently enter the sand at a specific point (e.g. 1½ inches behind the ball), then your consistency out of bunkers will rise dramatically and so will your confidence.

Drill #4 - Golf Tee

Golfers find it hard to come to terms with the fact that they don't have to hit the ball to get it out of the bunker, and this leads to two things happening. The first one is hitting the ball first, which obviously results in some bad shots. And the second one is decelerating at the ball and letting the club contact the sand way behind the ball, and because the club is going so slowly the sand does not have enough force to get the ball out.

Now luckily I've got a great drill for you that with practice will get you used to the feeling you should have through the bunker shot. And funnily enough you don't even need to do this drill in a bunker, and if you have one of those soft practice golf balls you should be able to do this drill at home.

So what's the drill?

Well, you simply have to tee up a ball very high and setup to it. Once you've setup to the shot the next step is to swing back to halfway and then through the shot to a full-finish. The goal is to hit the tee under the ball so the ball simply falls to the ground. Here's some photos that will help demonstrate this.



As you can see, the ball is sitting on the ground because I've hit the tee. Also notice how my follow-through is much longer than my backswing. For 95% of bunker shots you should have a longer follow-through than your backswing.

You hardly ever want your follow-through to be the same or shorter than your backswing. The reason is because having a longer follow-through automatically creates acceleration, and you must accelerate through bunker shots to ever be successful at them.

Also you must get used to not hitting the ball and this drill helps to teach you both of these aspects. So in conclusion, you should practice this a drill a lot. And once again, if you have a soft practice golf ball (*one of those ones that go about 50 yards with a full shot*) then simply use that and do this drill at home.

Conclusion

As I said in the introduction...you should pick one exercise/drill from each of the main areas of the short game. And practice these exercises/drills for at least 30 days before trying new ones.

So now you've read this entire book choose the exercises you're going to do and start to do them.

Because when you do you'll up and down it much more often and you'll take strokes off your scores. So good luck in doing that and make sure you keep doing the selected exercises and drills enough to make them habits!